



**NEW MEXICO
BUSINESS COALITION**

P.O. Box 95735,
Albuquerque, NM 87199
(505) 235-6323

RE: Support HB 103 Battery on a Peace Officer Penalty

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

The New Mexico Business Coalition (NMBC) represents hundreds of businesses and thousands of New Mexicans. Our focus is to make New Mexico a better place to live and work, where we have an abundance of good-paying jobs to provide for our families.

NMBC supports HB 103 Battery on a Peace Officer Penalty because the job of a police officer is more dangerous now than ever before. One of the premier events that NMBC hosts each year is the Heroes Banquet. Part of this event includes honoring law enforcement and other first responders killed in the line of duty. Unfortunately, far too many police officers have been lost recently.

There are officer shortages by the hundreds in Albuquerque and other departments around the state because most people looking for jobs are not interested in this line of work. Previous legislation signed into law by Governor Lujan Grisham to remove qualified immunity, allowing officers to be held personally liable for actions taken in performing their duties, made retaining and recruiting officers even worse.

HB 103 would send a strong message to criminals that action taken against our police officers will not be tolerated. This measure is long overdue. Although not a fix for reinstating qualified immunity, NMBC encourages you to pass this bill and increase the penalty for harming a police officer. This would send a positive message to those who place their lives in danger each day to protect and serve. It would also let violent criminals know that actions they take to harm a police officer will be met with serious outcomes.

We urge you to vote "YES" HB 103 Battery on a Peace Officer Penalty.

Thank you for considering my comments,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag
President and CEO